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FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

FSIS Enhances Food Safety Awareness with Launch of RSS Feeds and Web 2.0 Tools

On March 26, FSIS launched Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds for news and recall releases. Also, FSIS added the capability to bookmark and share food safety content on personal and public social networking Web pages.

RSS feeds are an effective method of summarizing the latest news and information from a Web site. The feeds for news content complement those already available for the FSIS podcasting series Food Safety at Home and Food Safety for Meat, Poultry, and Processed Egg Product Inspection. All RSS feeds are accessible at www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Feeds/index.asp.

“We are excited to provide food safety information and resources in another timely and convenient manner,” said FSIS Administrator, Al Almanza. He emphasized that, “For issues of food safety and public health, delivering useful information to as many consumers as possible is a top priority.”

To further engage with consumers and stakeholders, FSIS launched a Twitter account to reach a larger audience on the web, in which traditional means of communication may not have been reaching.

These new features will encourage wider use and awareness of multimedia and other informational resources already provided by FSIS. To keep up with food safety announcements and useful tips and resources, follow us at www.twitter.com/USDAFoodSafety.



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Export Requirement Updates



The Library of Export Requirements has been updated to reflect changes in export requirements for the following:

Japan

Complete information can be found at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Export_Information/index.asp.

FSIS Constituent Update is prepared by the Office of Congressional and Public Affairs Office (CPAO).

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Register for Codex Public Meeting on Food Labeling

FSIS and the Department of Health and Human Services' Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced a public meeting to discuss information and receive public comments on agenda items to draft U.S. positions that will be discussed at the 37th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labeling (CCFL) to be held in Calgary, Canada.

The meeting will be held April 7, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. in Room 107A of the Jamie Whitten Federal Building, 1200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C.

Attendees must pre-register and present photo identification at the door. To pre-register, please send your name, organization, mailing address, phone number and e-mail address to Maria Espinoza at uscodex@fsis.usda.gov or call (202) 205-7760. Individuals may also fax items to (202) 720-3157.

Documents and agenda items related to the 37th Session of CCFL will be available on the Codex Alimentarius Web site at www.codexalimentarius.net/current.asp.

Consumer Alert: USDA's Tips on Keeping Food Safe During an Emergency

Many regions across the country affected by flooding because of severe winter weather are experiencing power outages. USDA has a resource that advises you on how to avoid foodborne illnesses if you lose electricity.

In *The Consumer's Guide to Food Safety: Severe Storms and Hurricanes*, information and recommendations about keeping food safe during times of power outages and flooding are provided.

Check out consumer food safety fact sheets and videos at www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Emergency_Preparedness_Fact_Sheets/index.



FSIS Posts New Podcast

Tune in and subscribe to podcasts that offer helpful information on the selection, handling and preparation of meat and poultry products to reduce the risk of foodborne illness.

This week, FSIS released a podcast helpful to plant owners and operators. Check out this new podcast on the FSIS Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/news_&_events/Podcasts/index.asp.

Freedom of Information Act - Part II



Check out USDA's Food Safety Quiz for Parents and Kids

Before you let your kids have the run of the kitchen, USDA advises you to take a little quiz together, visit www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/NR_090704_01/index.asp.



Register for FSIS "How To" Workshops for Small and Very Small Plants

The Agency is hosting a series of "how to" workshops to provide practical tools and methods for proper application and compliance.

These outreach workshops will cover various information on Specified Risk Materials (SRMs), developing controls for *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter*, establishing effective sanitation practices, developing food defense plans, ensuring humane handling of livestock and conducting product recalls.

Visit www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Outreach_Sessions_SVS_Plants/index.asp to register for a workshop. Individuals may also register by phone at 1-800-336-3747. Pre-registration is not required but it is highly encouraged.

<p>April 3 Denver, Colorado 1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Four Points by Sheraton Denver Southeast 6363 East Hampden Avenue (Effective Sanitation)</p>	<p>April 3 Cincinnati, Ohio 1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Cincinnati Marriott Kingsgate Conference Hotel 151 Goodman Drive (Food Defense Plans)</p>
<p>April 7 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Holiday Inn Historic District 400 Arch Street (Recalls)</p>	

Updates on FSIS Testing for *E. coli* O157:H7

Weekly updates for the Agency's raw beef *E. coli* sampling program are posted to FSIS' Web site.

For comparative 2008 and 2009 results, go to www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Ground_Beef_E.Coli_Testing_Results/index.asp.